

MCT CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM DRAFTING COMMITTEE

Date: 5/21/24 Time: 6 PM

Facilitator: Carol J.

Present: Raymond B., Sally F.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Carol J. said she only stayed at the White Earth Meeting on 5/15/24 for about 20 minutes. The Zoom audience could not hear. They were having trouble with their microphones.

2. MCT

- The conversation centered around the potential dissolution of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT).
 - Discussed issues about MCT, including lack of engagement and funding.
 - Mille Lacs Band wants nothing to do with MCT.
 - MCT will be reconstructed. It is not the job of the Constitution Reform to dissolve the MCT organization.
 - Sally F. said we can't dissolve them because those are our people, too. You can't just wipe the table of those people; this is their job.
 - Sally F. suggested that the MCT was the Minnesota Chippewa tribe, the holder of the Supreme Court, that Leech Lake got rid of Archie Larose through the Minnesota Chippewa tribe, and that the court was higher than our court. She said she wants the MCT for the highest court in the land. Otherwise, we have to write that into our constitution.
 - Carol J. said, "MCT as a court?" They're not a judicial body. They're an organization that provides funding and programming for the federal government.
 - Raymond B. said the MCT was set up at a financial institution. That's what it was because we have to have those programs. Mille Lacs may not need them now because they are making money through the casinos, but that can change.
 - The committee members shared personal stories and perspectives on the challenges faced by Native American communities, including funding, corruption, and cultural appropriation.
 - The committee emphasized the need for a national identity, territory, and jurisdictional area and a separation of powers in the government structure. They also stressed the importance of including treaty provisions in the constitution and establishing an appeals process for elected officials.
 - Carol J. suggested that we get the Alliance more solid, and we will have conversations with MCT because we're proposing to change a few things.

3. Healthcare, Funding, and Identity Fraud.

- The committee emphasizes the importance of unity and numbers in the face of funding challenges.
- Members discussed issues with enrollment process for Native American tribes, including fraudulent identity claims.
- Committee members shared their experiences with the overwhelming demand for dental appointments, highlighting challenges in accessing healthcare.
- Non-Native claiming to be Ojibwe and profiting from it, as well as the challenges of accessing healthcare and dental services on the reservations.
- Carol J. said Indigenous fraud should be a Federal Crime. This topic would be great for our six reservations and the additional tribes joining our Alliance to work together.

4. Local Constitutions

- Members emphasize the importance of unity and cooperation in creating a local constitution.
- Carol J. Shared her work summarizing chapters of the book, "**Structuring Sovereignty Constitution of Native Nations By Melissa L. Tatum, Mirian Jorgensen, Mary E. Guss, and Sarah Deer. 2014 The Regents of the University of California. ATTACHMENT 1.**

5. Tribal Constitutions and Appeal Processes for Elected Officials.

- Sally F. suggested Leech Lake will write in their Local Constitution that elected officials should not have appeal process if they're thrown out for ethics violations.
- Raymond B. said regular citizens should have an appeal process for membership decisions.
- Tribal council members discuss removing the secretary, violations, and censorship.

6. Tribal Election Process, Constitutional Safeguards, and Tribal Executive Committee structure.

- We discussed election preparations and coordination with local constitutions.
- Concerns were expressed about Tribal Elections. We all need to read the Election Ordinance.
- There is also a concern that the TEC will make ordinances or resolutions without oversight. Who's going to stop it?
- Carol J. recommended in her presentation at the convention that the Grand Council structure, where representatives from each band's citizens have oversight of Resolutions and Ordinances.

7. Enrollment

- Sally F. discusses the tribal enrollment ordinance and blood quantum with others and is concerned about the lack of oversight in TEC's amendment process and election process.
- Those who have not looked at the enrollment ordinance must.
- Carol J. reported that enrollment is a significant and not an easy issue.
- Carol J. reported that she took a Falmouth Training on Enrollment, and there is a lot to deal with. Staff will need training. **ATTACHMENT 2**
- Raymond stated that White Earth is already overwhelmed.
- TEC needs to seek input from the citizens on enrollment ordinance and process after removing Secretary of Interior.

8. Removing Secretary of Interior From Article XII, with Legal Insights And Notes on Upcoming Meeting.

- Sally F. reported that at an upcoming meeting, Leech Lake's attorney will provide insights on the legal implications of removing the Secretary of Interior from Article XII. She will take good notes, and if there is any written document, she will share it.

9. Leaving the Alliance

- Sally F. stated that if a tribe (MLB) did not want to be part of the Minnesota Chippewa tribe, it would be easy enough with the Alliance document to back out of the Alliance. They don't wish for a government to come from the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe.
- Carol J. stated that there will be statements from the Alliance and Local Constitutions that we adopt the Alliance. They will stay in the Alliance unless the Alliance and the local Constitution are amended through a Tribal election.

10. Removal of TEC and RBC

- Someone said at the convention that the TEC and the RBC will be gone. Carol J. stated that she thinks that at the local level, some reservation bands will be using RBC. Maybe others will rename it but have the same concept/function related to business.

11. Assignment for the Next Convention

- We must start thinking about language in our local constitutions and be ready to share them.
- We also need to look at the language in the Alliance and the local constitutions that will keep us together and make that connection between the documents.

Next meeting: 5/28/24 at 6 PM